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(54) Abstract Title

Data generation, processing and presentation over a network

(57) Generating, processing and presenting data where a set of characteristics is formulated by a first networked user terminal, the set of characteristics is transmitted from the first networked user terminal to a second networked user terminal, the set of characteristics is applied to data representative of activity at the second networked user terminal, this representative data is stored in the memory of the second networked user terminal and extracted at the first networked user terminal and the extracted representative data is compared with the characteristics formulated.

The above characteristics are formulated to enable a company's central management to monitor day-to-day promotions and therefore evaluate the extent to which day-to-day "brand positioning" is being correctly implemented and also evaluate its effectiveness so that appropriate brand management decisions may be taken.

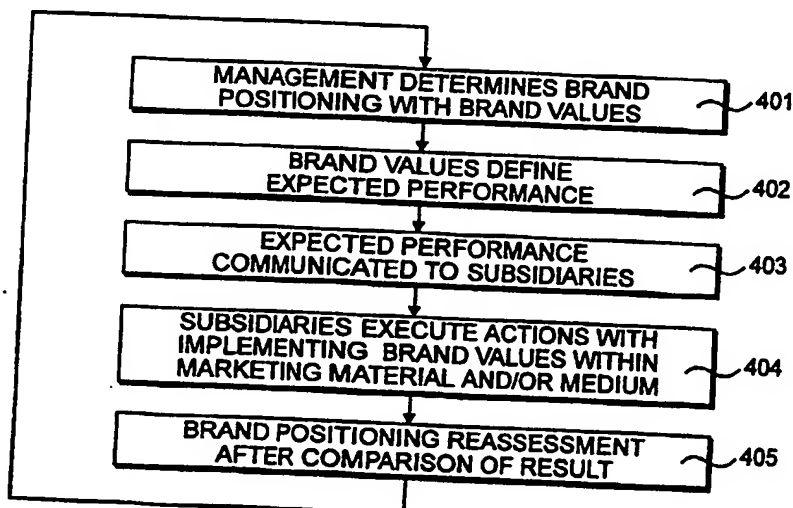


Figure 4

At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

This print takes account of replacement documents submitted after the date of filing to enable the application to comply with the formal requirements of the Patents Rules 1995

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1/13

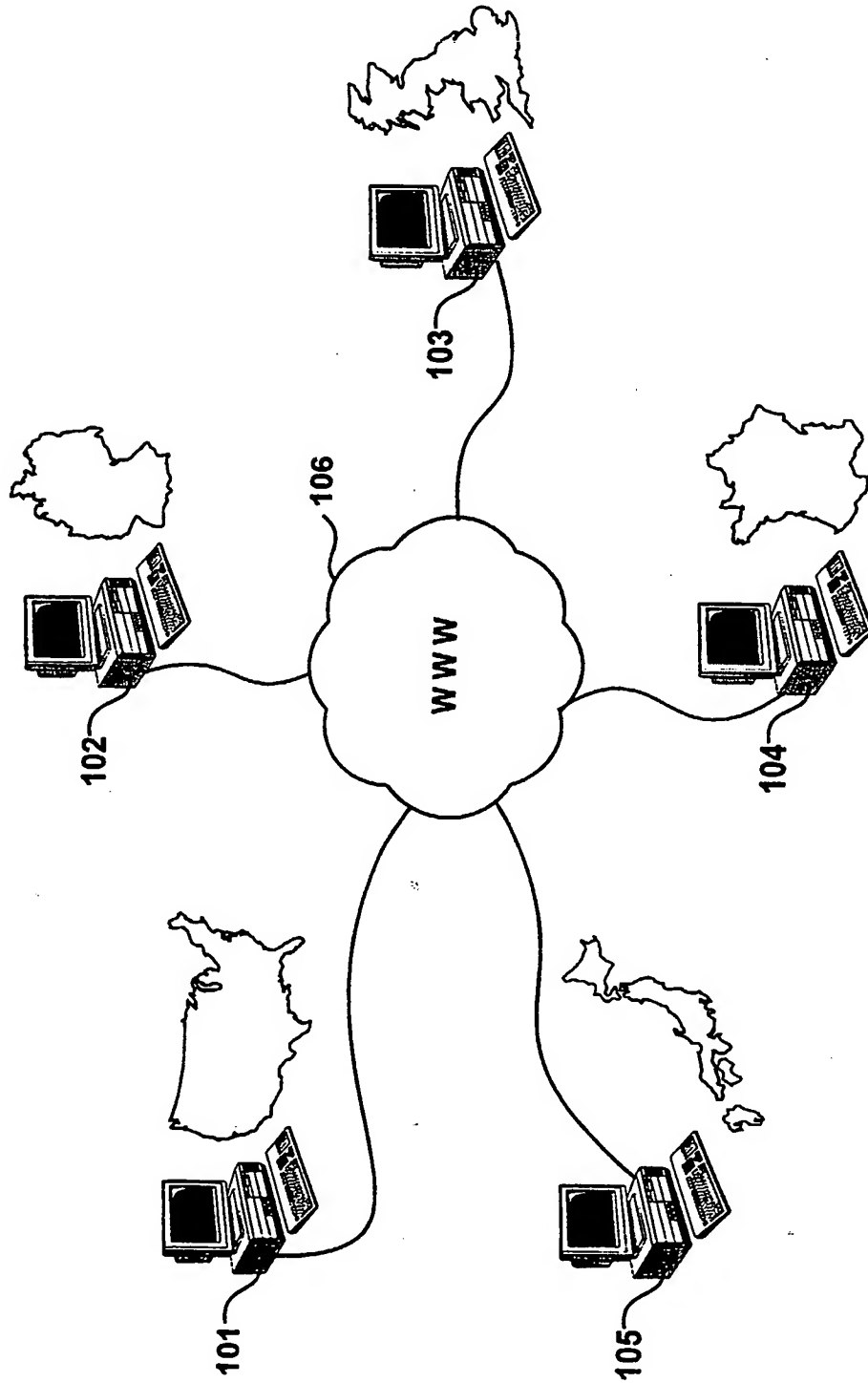
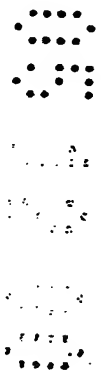


Figure 1



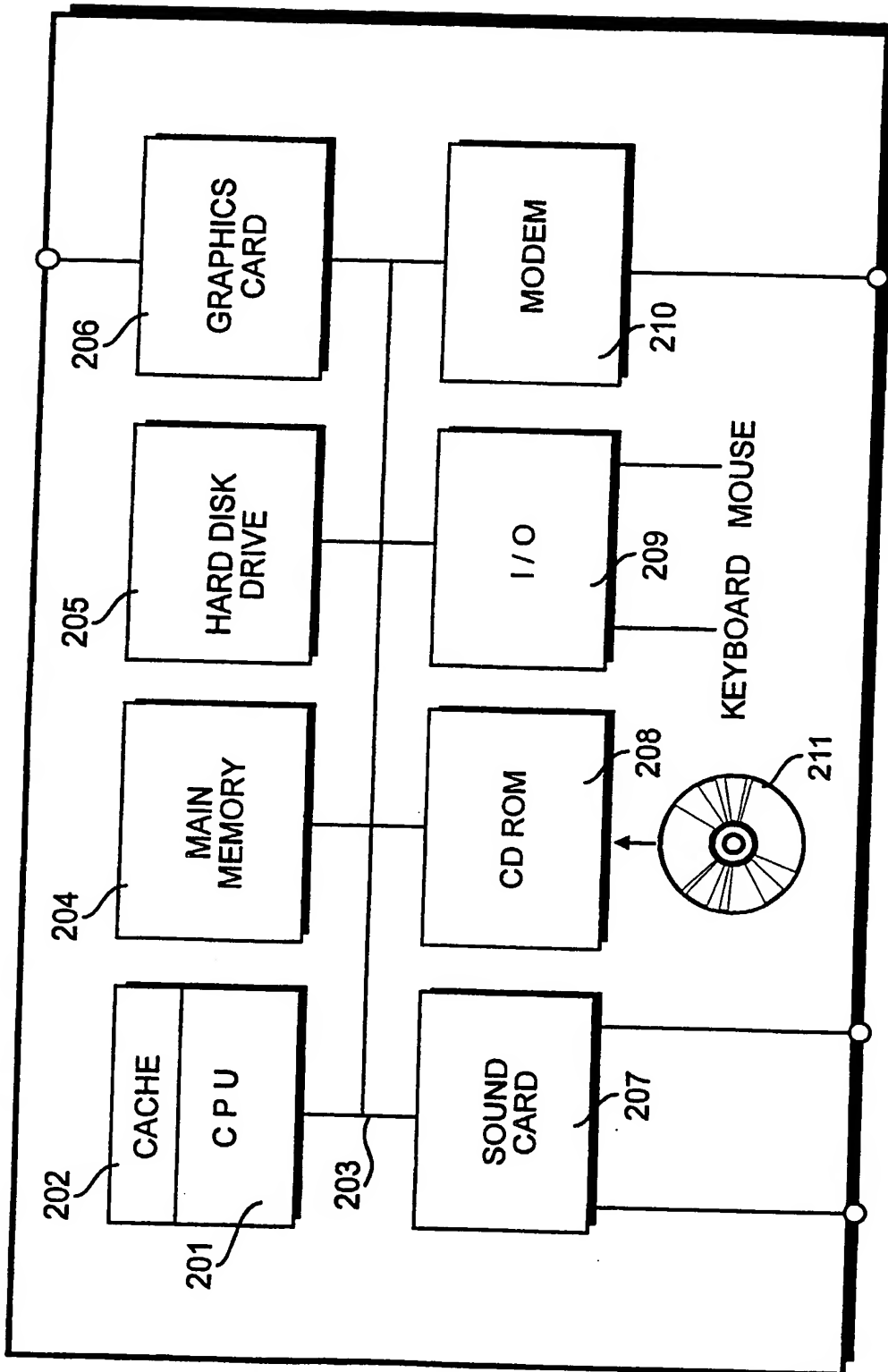
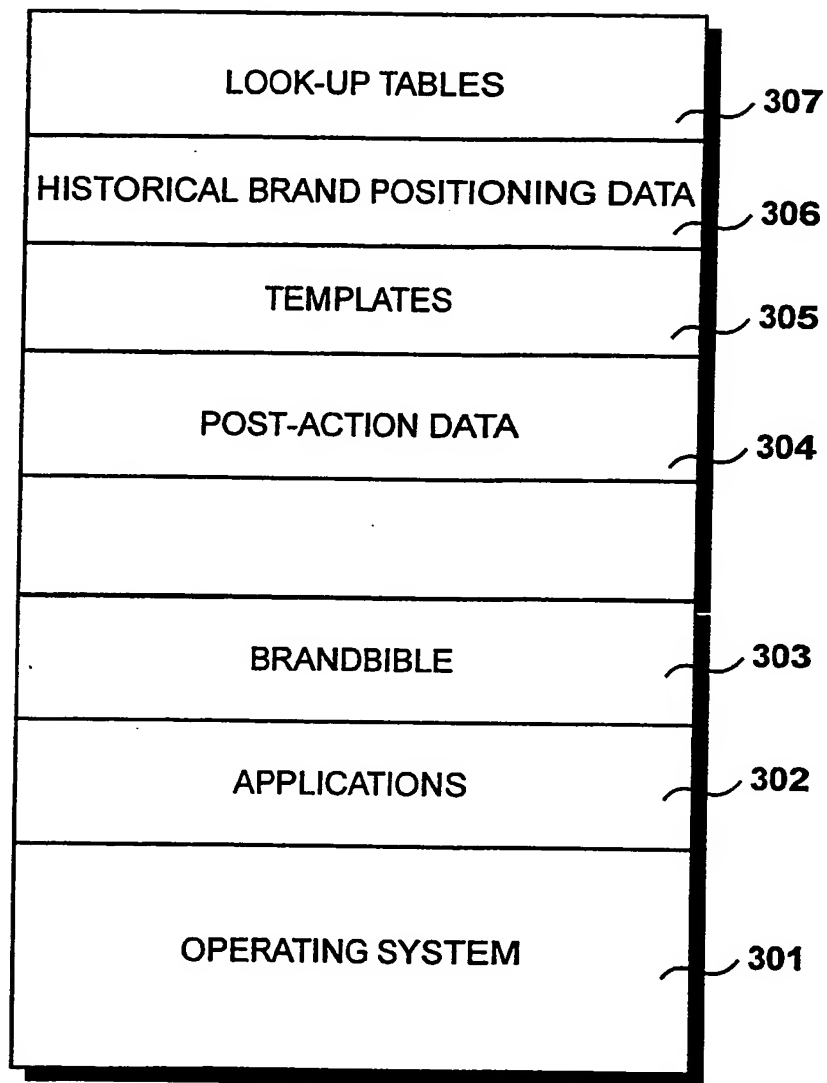


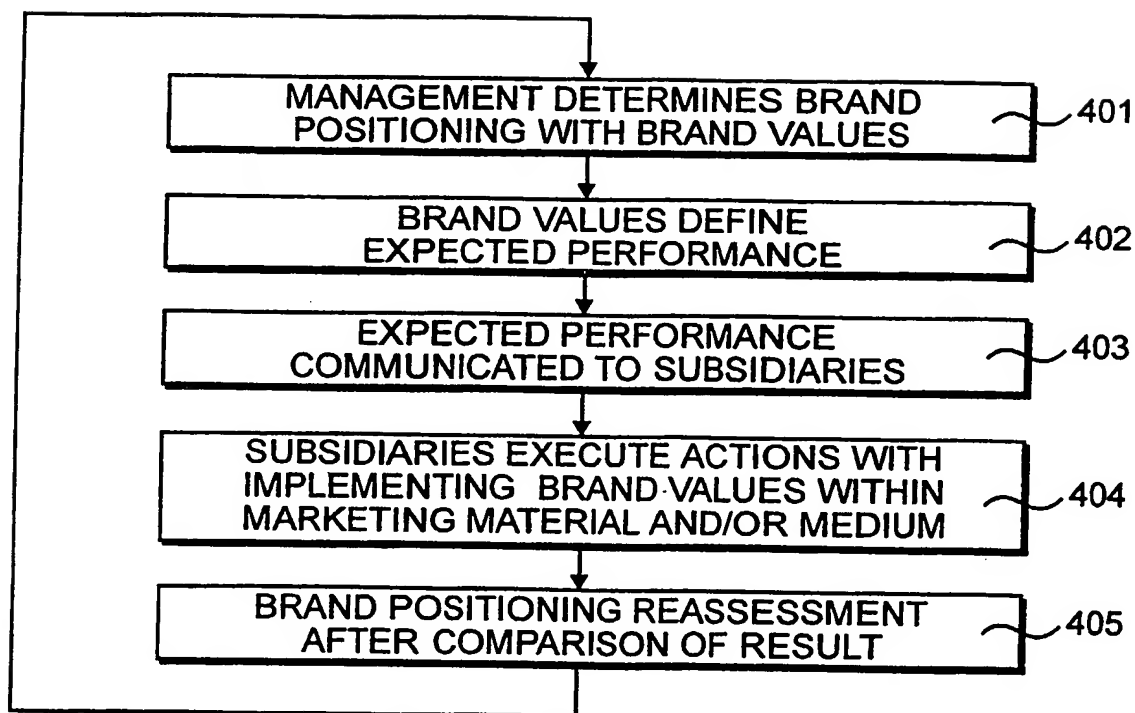
Figure 2

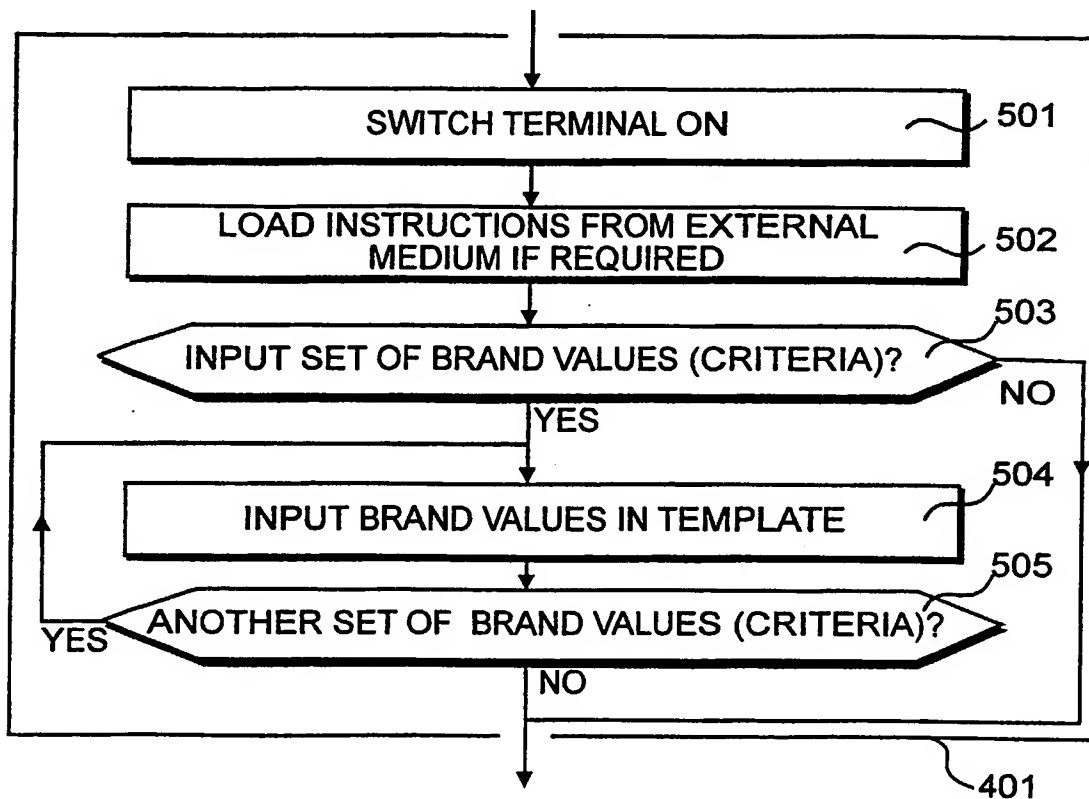
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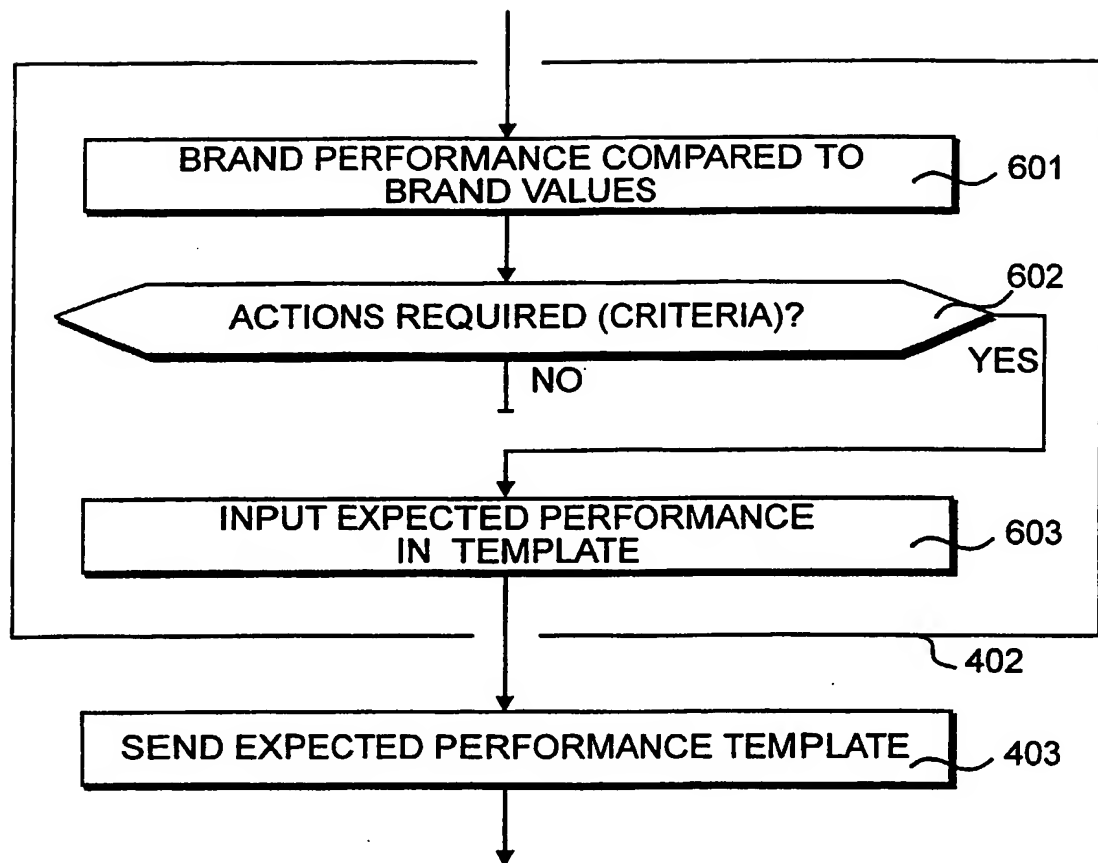
*Figure 3*

4/13

*Figure 4*

*Figure 5*

6/13

*Figure 6*

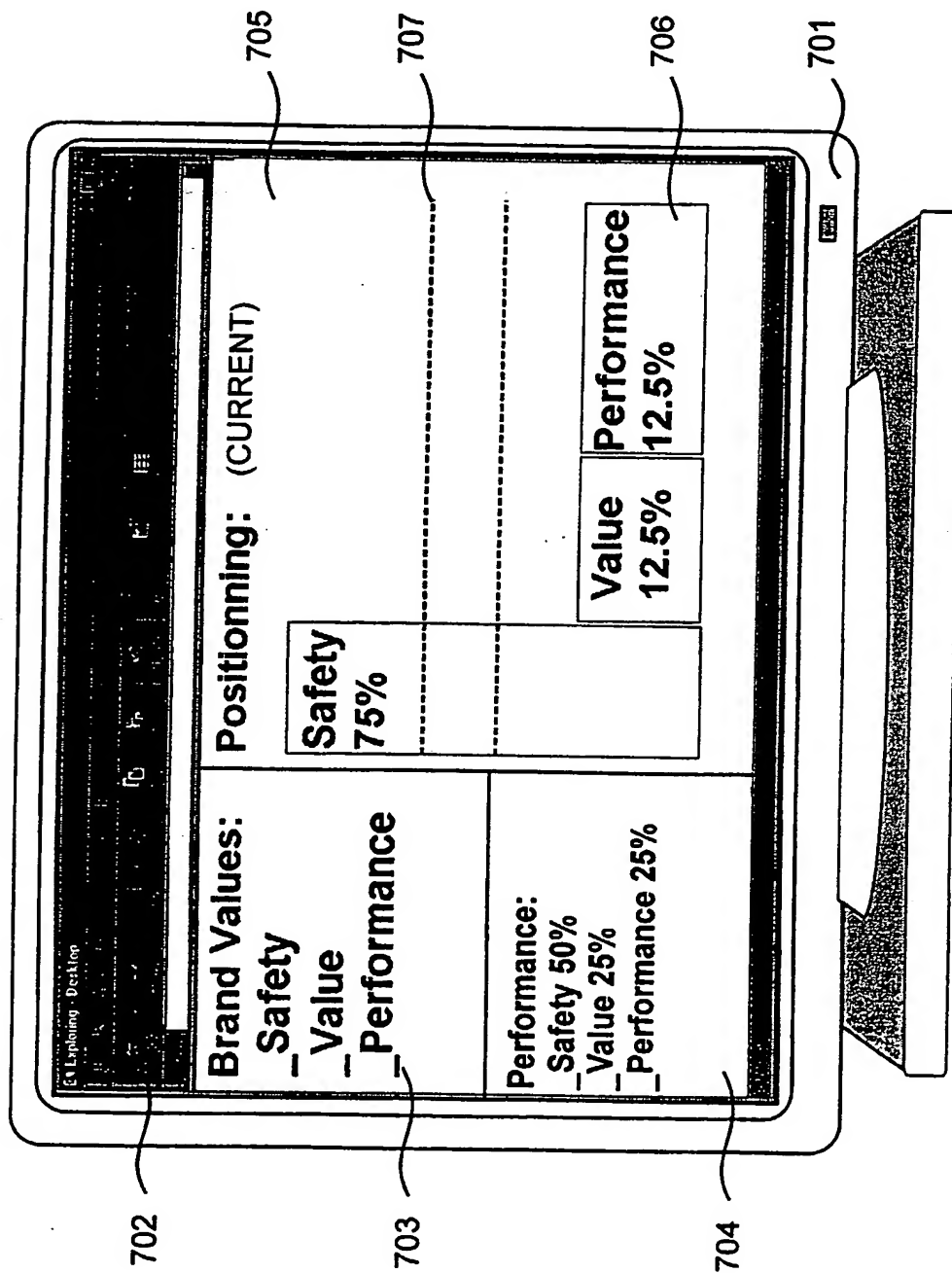


Figure 7

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

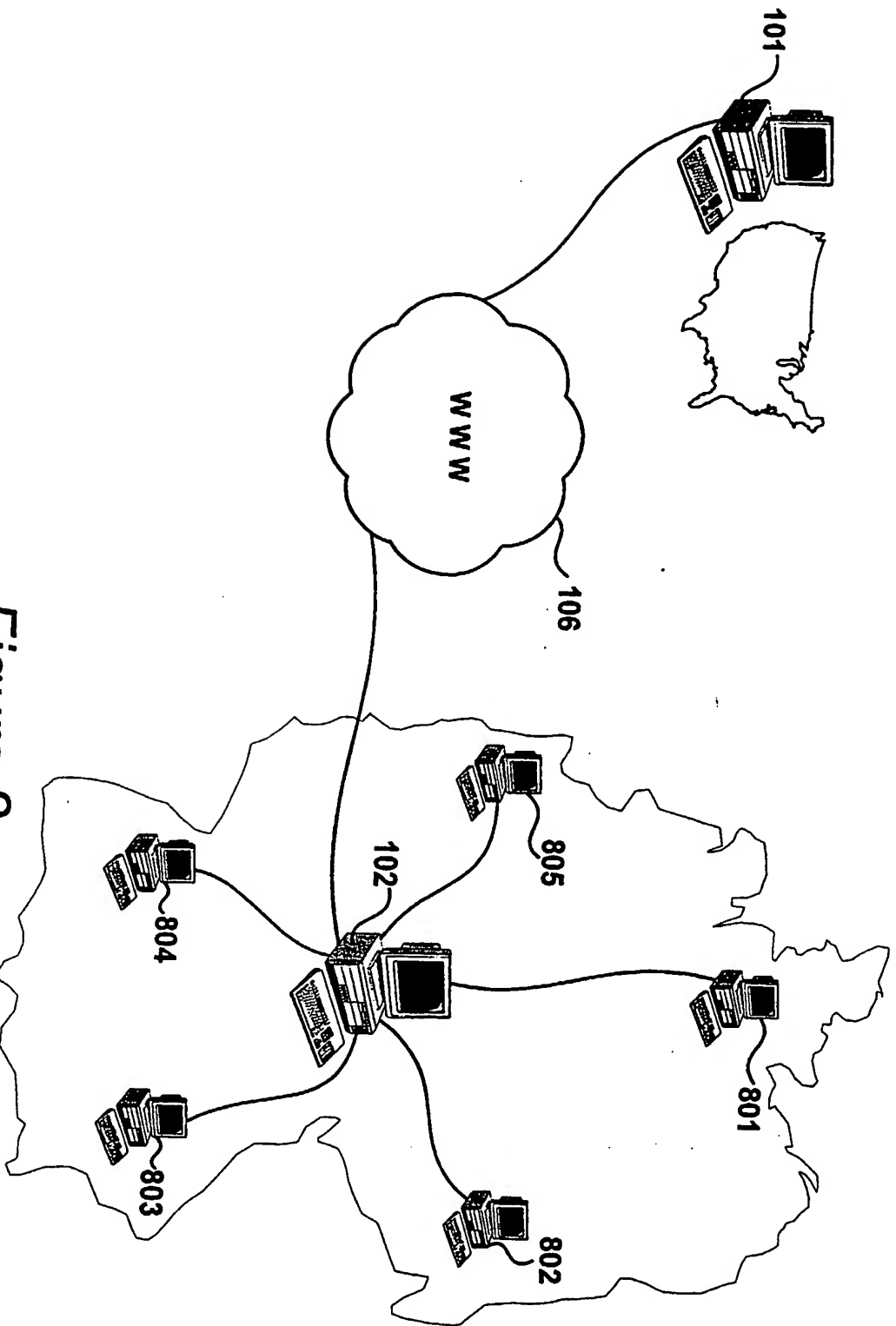
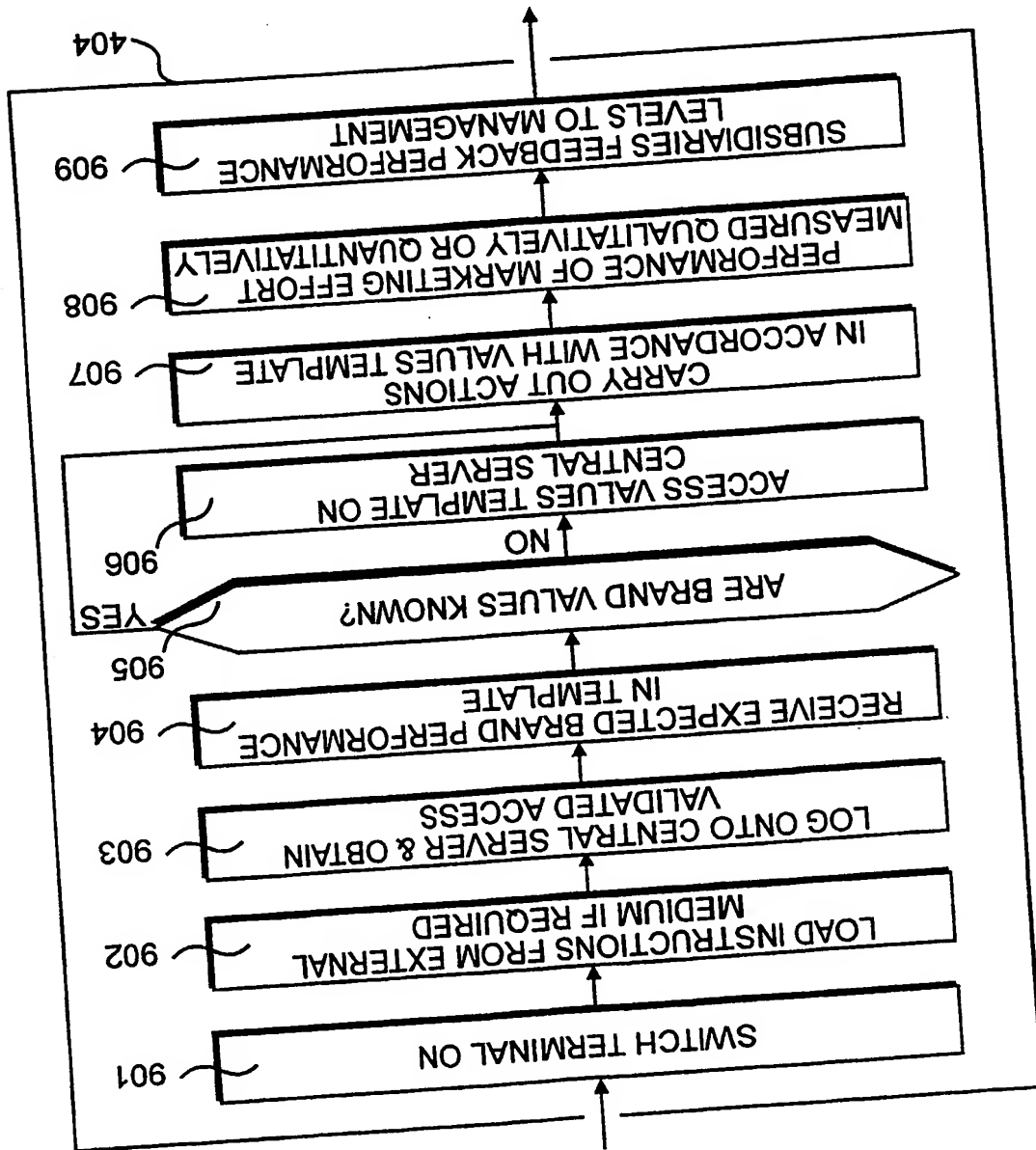


Figure 8

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Figure 9



10/13

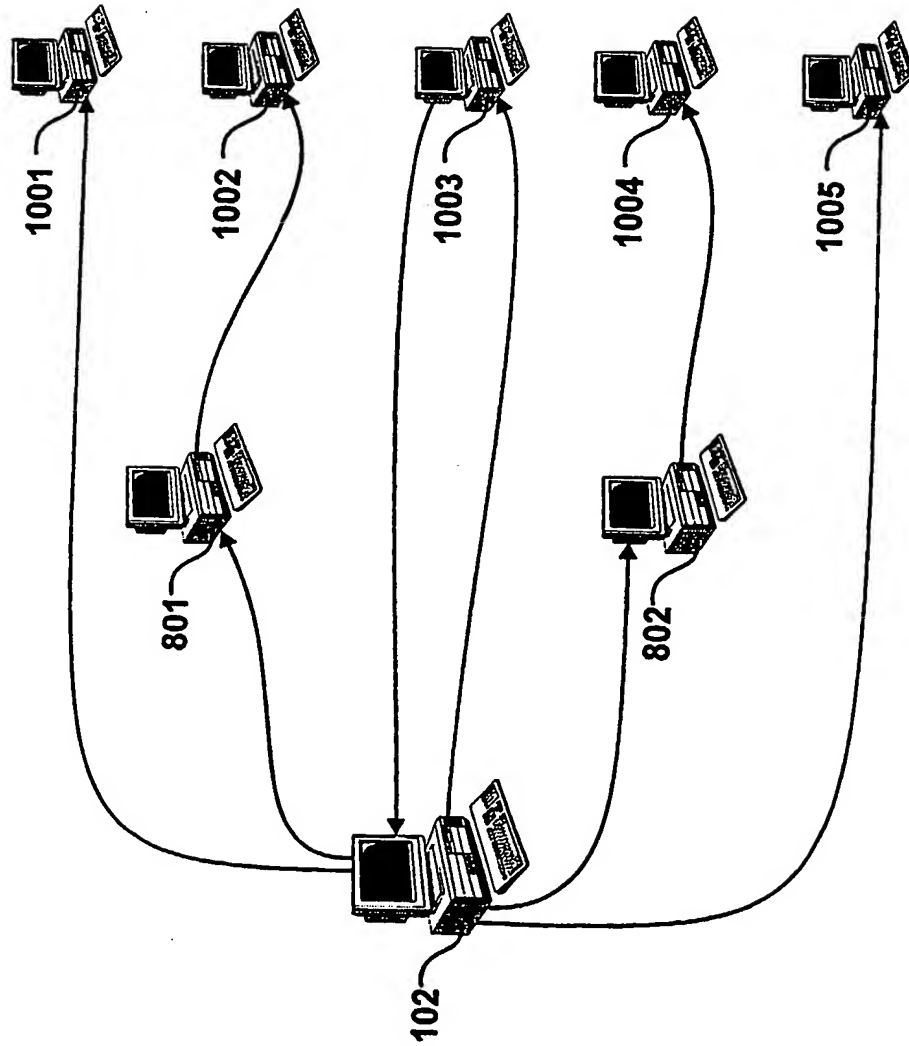
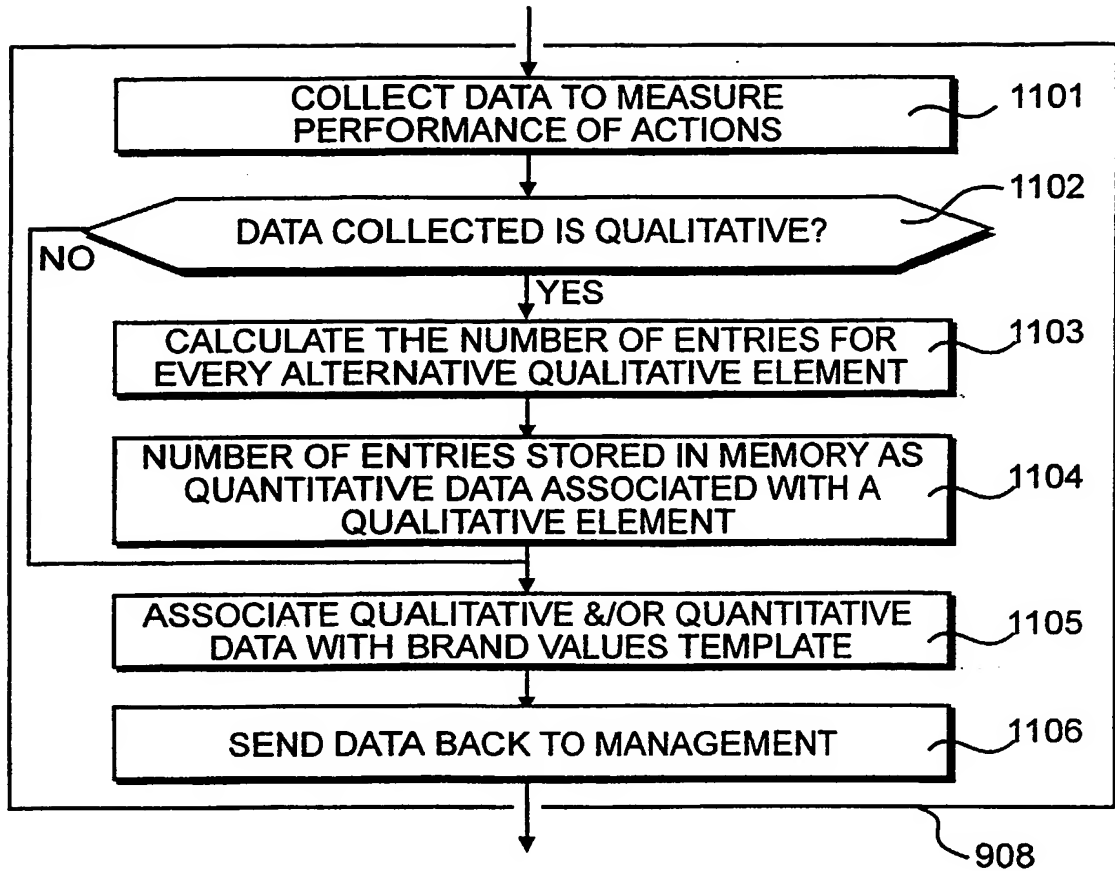


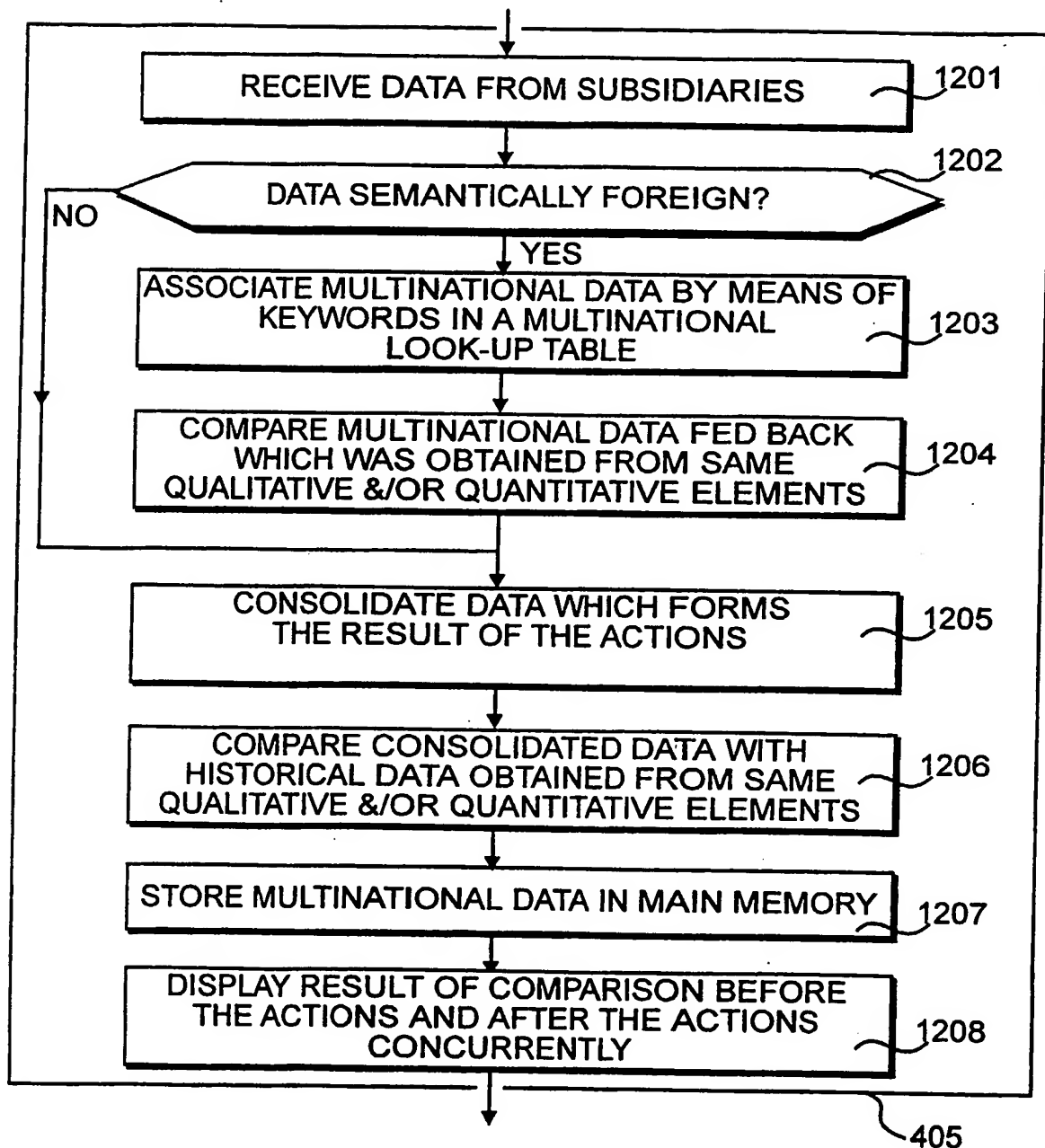
Figure 10

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*Figure 11*

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*Figure 12*

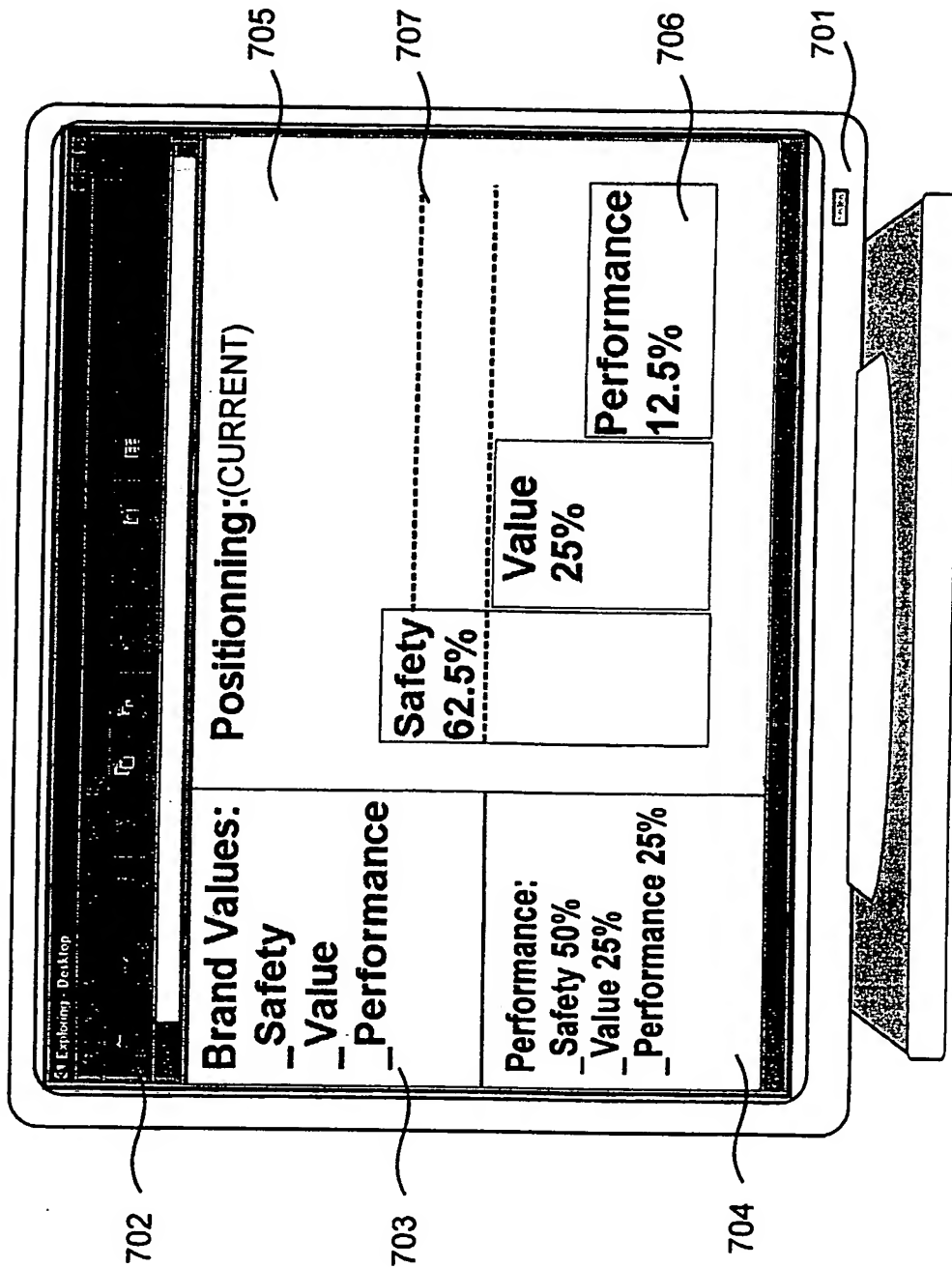


Figure 13



Data Generation, Processing and Presentation Method and Apparatus

Background of the Invention

5 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a data generation, processing and presentation method and apparatus and, more particularly, to the generation, processing and presentation of data relating to sales, marketing and advertising and, even more particularly, to what has become known as
10 "brand identity", "brand value" and "brand positioning".

2. Description of the Related Art

There was a time historically when "brands" otherwise known as trademarks, were very closely associated with the company which actually
15 manufactured the product in question. In those days the main purpose of brands or trademarks was to enable the buying public to identify the manufacturer of the particular product.

In recent times the trend has been away from this one-to-one correlation between the identity of the manufacturer and the brand or
20 trademark. In fact it is now not uncommon for a brand or trademark to be, as it were, free-standing and to have a significant financial value which is divorced from any particular product or manufacturer. It is in this context that marketing people often speak of "brand identity", "brand value" and
25 "brand positioning". As part of this development, even where a brand or trademark is still tied to a particular manufacturer, it is desired to imbue the brand or trademark with certain clearly defined characteristics which are to be conveyed to the buying public to either create a desire to purchase or

more often to repurchase the product. This is referred to as "brand positioning".

In other parlance, this often means getting the buying public to perceive in a brand or trademark certain "lifestyle" characteristics.

5 In order to achieve this desired "brand identity" it is important that the central management of a company should be in a position to not only convey the desired "brand identity" to its sales force but should be able to monitor the presentation of the brand in the market place and to assess its effectiveness.

10 For a company which has a global/international business it can prove extremely difficult for the central management to either obtain the necessary information or if obtained to digest that information sufficiently for commercially useful decisions to be made.

15 **Brief Summary of the Invention**

The present invention is concerned with providing a method and apparatus to enable the company's central management to a)effectively impart the "brand identity" to those in the organisation responsible for the day-to-day promotion of the brand to the buying public, b)monitor those day
20 to day promotions, c) analyse the results of b) to evaluate the extent to which the day-to-day "brand positioning" is being correctly implemented and also evaluating its effectiveness and d)taking management decisions on the basis of c).

25 Thus, according to the present invention a system of generating, processing and presenting data comprises:

- i) formulating a set of criteria and characteristics at a networked central server;

ii) transmitting said set of criteria from said networked central server to one or more networked user terminals logged onto said central server;

5 iii) applying said criteria and characteristics into data representative of a marketing or sales activity at each networked user terminal;

iv) storing the data of iii. In a memory;

v) extracting data from the memory by the networked central server; and

10 vi) comparing the extended data with the criteria and characteristics input at i).

Brief Description of the Several Views of the Drawings

15 *Figure 1* shows a network of computers individually located in separate countries and connected via the Internet;

Figure 2 details hardware components of a user terminal of the type illustrated in *Figures 1, 10* and *8*, including a memory;

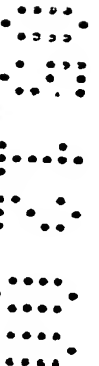
Figure 3 details the contents of the memory shown in *Figure 2*, an application to generate process and present brand positioning data;

20 *Figure 4* summarises actions performed in order to generate, process and present brand positioning data;

Figure 5 summarises actions performed at a central server when inputting brand values;

25 *Figure 6* summarises actions performed at the same central server when defining brand positioning exercises, or actions;

Figure 7 shows a graphic display of the brand positioning application after the brand values have been inputted, along with actions and expected



performance;

Figure 8 shows a network of computers located in one of the countries illustrated in *Figure 1*;

5 *Figure 9* summarises actions performed at a networked user terminal when executing actions, including measurements of performance and feedback to the central server;

Figure 10 shows a network of computers, with at least some of said computers being connected to the network illustrated in *Figure 8*;

10 *Figure 11* summarises actions performed at a user terminal in order to obtain the performance measurement of *Figure 9*;

Figure 12 summarises actions at the central server when assessing the brand positioning after said actions have been implemented;

15 *Figure 13* shows a graphic display of the brand positioning shown in *Figure 6* after said actions have been implemented;

Best Mode for Carrying Out the Invention

The invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the previously identified drawings.

20 A network of user terminals, comprising a user terminal located at the headquarters of a global company and a plurality of user terminals respectively located at various national subsidiaries of the global company is illustrated in *Figure 1*. Said subsidiaries may belong in part or totality to the global company, or simply be associated with the global company as its distributors, resellers or any other type of company associated with the
25 global company's distribution chain.

User terminal 101 is located at the headquarters of a global company, with those headquarters located in the United States. The user

terminal **101** acts as a central server and is respectively connected to user terminal **102** of the German subsidiary, user terminal **103** of the British subsidiary, user terminal **104** of the French subsidiary and user terminal **105** of the Japanese subsidiary, wherein each of the terminals **101**, **102**, **103**, **104** and **105** are connected to one another via for instance the Internet **106**. In the example, the global company manufactures and markets motor vehicles.

Hardware forming the main part of a user's computer terminal **101** or **102** is illustrated in *Figure 2*. A central processing unit **201** fetches and executes instructions and manipulates data. Frequently accessed instructions and data are stored in a high speed cache memory **202**. The central processing unit **201** is connected to a system bus **203**. This provides connectivity with a larger main memory **204**, which requires significantly more time to access than the cache **202**. The main memory **204** contains between sixty-four and one hundred and twenty-eight megabytes of dynamic random access memory. A hard disc drive (HDD) **205** provides non-volatile bulk storage of instructions and data. A graphics card **206** receives graphics data from the CPU **201**, along with graphics instructions. Preferably, the graphics card **206** includes substantial dedicated graphical processing capabilities, so that the CPU **201** is not burdened with computationally intensive tasks for which it is not optimised. Similarly, a sound card **207** receives sound data from the CPU **201**, along with sound processing instructions.

Preferably, the sound card **207** includes substantial dedicated digital sound processing capabilities, so that the CPU **201** is not burdened with computationally intensive tasks for which it is not optimised. A CD-ROM reader **208** receives processing instructions and data from an external CD-

ROM medium 211. A serial bus interface 209 provides connectivity to peripherals such as a mouse and keyboard. A modem 210 provides connectivity to the Internet 106 via a telephone connection. The equipment shown in *Figures 1, 8 or 10* constitutes a personal computer of fairly standard type, such as an IBM compatible PC or Apple Macintosh, whether
5 used as a network terminal or as a network server.

The contents of the memory 204 of the user's personal computer 101 shown in *Figure 2* are summarised in *Figure 3*. An operating system, including a basic BIOS is shown at 301. This provides common functionality
10 shared between all applications operating on the computer 101, such as disk drive access, file handling and window-based graphical user interfacing.

Applications 302 include instructions for an Internet 106 browser, a file browser and other items, that are usually present but inactive on the
15 user's graphical desktop.

The Brand positioning application 303 include instructions to generate, process and present brand positioning data. The brand positioning data includes post-action data 304 uploaded from remote user terminals associated with subsidiaries and templates 305 which are used to
20 format the message containing brand values and brand positioning activity and sent to subsidiaries. The brand positioning data also includes historical brand positioning data 306 and a plurality of functional look-up tables 307.

As the senior management of the car manufacturing company is usually appraised of the value of its brand or brands, the management is
25 able to differentiate between qualitative attributes of the brand or brands, and quantitative attributes thereof. Qualitative attributes of a brand are commonly understood as perceived characteristics, ie perceived in terms of

build quality of a car, safety of a car or value of a car relative to its market price. By definition, such attributes have a strong psychological component and, as such, are difficult to quantify for analysis purposes. Quantitative attributes of a brand, however, are measured characteristics, ie how many customers purchase a brand, how many of those customers regularly re-purchase the brand and so on and so forth.

With regard to market dynamics, the senior management of the North American global company preferably wants to achieve a convergence of both of the qualitative and quantitative perception of its brand or brands within all the markets it services, whether such markets are geographically delimited or delimited according to some other criteria, such as demographics or life styles.

It is therefore imperative that the global company communicates the attributes of its brand or brands, also understood as brand values, as consistently as possible to all of its subsidiaries, in order to present customer and other interested parties with a single, unified brand positioning the world over. This desirable consistency is achieved according to the present invention, wherein user terminal 101 stores all of the brand values and consistently distributes those to any which one of the user terminals of the subsidiaries as criteria according to which any brand positioning exercise, understood as marketing activity, should be carried out.

Figure 4 identifies the present invention and summarises actions performed at user terminal 101 in order to generate, process and present brand positioning data, and impart consistency to the presentation of the brand throughout its markets;

The senior management of the global company initially determine a

desirable brand positioning which is in effect the sum total of a set of brand values, at step **401**. The brand values may comprise qualitative data or quantitative data, or a combination or association thereof. In effect, brand values are the characteristics of the brand senior management expects customers and other interested parties to psychologically assimilate and combine to achieve a required or desired brand positioning. As such, the brand values define the expected performance of the actions, ie brand positioning activities or marketing efforts, at step **402**. Brand positioning activity comprises all known type of media communication with customers of a brand or other interested parties, such above the line marketing (ie radio and television commercials, promotions), or below the line marketing (ie direct marketing eg direct mail, customer satisfaction surveys, aftersale service).

At step **403**, the expected brand performance is communicated to all of the subsidiaries of the global company.

At step **404**, the subsidiaries execute actions within the market they have the responsibility of, with taking care of implementing the brand values within the marketing material and/or medium which is being used to execute those actions. Impact data, which gives an indication of the measure of the success or failure of the above actions, is subsequently collected so that the brand positioning can be reassessed by the central server at the headquarters, at step **405**.

In order to achieve consistency, not only of brand values, but also of the components thereof such as brand assets (ie logo, corporate colour, corporate printing font), the delivery format of the communication of the brand value must be uniform and, as such, is best achieved by using templates.

Figure 5 summarises actions performed at a user terminal, which is preferably the central server, when inputting brand values in one of the templates.

5 A user terminal, preferably central server 101 of the global company's headquarters is switched on at step 501. If required, the set of instructions which constitutes the brand positioning application is loaded from an external medium at step 502. The external medium may take the form of a CD ROM, which will be read by CD ROM reader 211, or a local area network (LAN) or the Internet 106.

10 Upon loading the instructions at step 502, a question is asked as to whether a set of brand values should be inputted at step 503. Such a question can only be asked at central server 101, which acts as the central server for the networked user terminals shown in *Figure 1*, thus ensuring consistency of the message and its content delivered to all networked user
15 terminals of the subsidiaries of the global company. If the question asked at step 503 is answered positively, then the senior management of the global company utilises a template to input the set of brand values at step 504. In effect, the template is displayed on the graphical user interface of the brand positioning application 303 and prompts the user terminal operator to input
20 the brand values, whether in qualitative terms or quantitative terms or a combination thereof, by means of a keyboard or other data input device. The template may take whichever form as used by those skilled in the art to receive machine-readable text.

25 Upon completing the aforementioned input of the set of the brand values, a question is asked at step 505 as to whether another set of brand values require inputting. If the question is answered positively, then the process is returned to making use of the brand values input template at

step 504. Alternatively, if the question asked at step 505 is answered in the negative then the process moves on to step 402.

Similariy, should the question asked at step 503 be answered in the negative, then the process also moves directly to step 402.

5 Actions performed at the same central terminal 101 when defining the brand performance at step 402, are summarised in *Figure 6*. At step 601, the brand values input at step 401 are compared to the brand performance. In effect, the senior management of the global company determines how the set of brand values inputted relate to the set of brand values actually perceived by purchasers of the brand and other interested parties and the extent to which such relation exists. From historical brand positioning data 306, which was obtained by means of processes according to the known prior art and inputted in the main memory of central server 101, the current brand positioning is derived by comparing the inputted brand values with existing perceived brand values to define the extent to which the respective sets of brand values correlate with one another. Such a comparison at step 601 may provide quantitative or qualitative results, or a combination thereof. Preferably, the result of the comparison is displayed in a graphical user interface and comprise a set of brand values which take the form of qualitative keywords which define the brand, and a quantitative indication of the level of perception of the qualificative keyword as a defining part of the brand within the brand's market.

25 At step 602, a question is asked as to whether actions are required, for instance if the brand performance is deemed insufficient by the senior management of the global company. Should the question be answered negatively, the senior management of the global company then deems the brand performance of its brand to be appropriate and the set of brand

values to be optimally perceived by the brand's customers and other interested parties. However, save for some very prominent companies servicing very narrow requirements, thus fairly specialised markets, the brand performance and brand values perception are never deemed optimum by senior management. Thus, the question asked at step 602 is most likely to be answered in the positive and, at step 603, expected brand performance is inputted by the senior management in the main memory of user terminal 101 and displayed within the graphical user interface of the brand positioning application 303.

Upon completing the inputting action of step 603, the process is then forwarded to step 403, wherein the template containing the set of brand values and the expected brand performance are sent to the user terminals 102, 103, 104 and 105 of the national subsidiaries of the global company for implementation.

A graphic display of the brand positioning application, including the template containing the inputted set of brand values, expected performance thereof and brand positioning data is shown in *Figure 7*.

A video display unit 701, which enables viewing of information stored and process by user terminal 101, displays the graphical user interface 702 of brand positioning application 303. The graphical user interface 702 comprises three distinct areas: brand values template 703, expected brand performance 704, and graphical representation area 705.

The senior management of the global company has input safety, value and performance as the brand values of their particular brand motor car at step 504, within template 703. Upon performing the comparison between the inputted set of brand values and the actual level of perception of the brand values relative to the brand at step 601, graphical display area

705 graphically represents the result of the comparison in histograms 706. The values shown for each brand value indicate that seventy-five percent of the brand's customers and other interested parties associate the safety brand value with the brand of the global company, twelve-and-a-half percent of the brand customers and other interested parties associate the value brand value with the brand of the global company and, on a level with the value brand value, twelve-and-a-half percent of the individuals associate the performance brand value with the brand. Effectively, the brand performance translate the fact that motor vehicles manufactured by the global company are perceived as extremely safe but offering relatively modest performance and value relative to their price. Consequently, the senior management of the global company, whilst aware of the benefits for their products to be sold under a brand strongly associated with safety, wants to improve the perception of the value and performance brand values by brand customers and other interested parties. Firstly, the senior management of global company inputs expected brand performance at step 603 into template 704.

Upon inputting expected brand performance indicators, the graphical representation area 705 is updated with a graphical representation 707 of the expected performance levels superimposed over the current performance levels.

In *Figure 8*, central server 101 conveys all of the brand values, in addition to which expected brand performance to user terminals 102 to 105. In the present embodiment, focus is placed on user terminal 102 of the German national subsidiary, but the embodiment is meant to be representative of the functionality imparted by the present invention to any user terminal networked to the central server. Thus, in an identical fashion,

user terminal **102** can convey the brand values to user terminals **201**, **202**, **203**, **204** and **205** of regional German subsidiaries reporting to the national German subsidiary.

5 According to the present invention, all of the aforementioned terminals, whether located at the national German subsidiaries or at the regional German subsidiaries thereof are receiving user terminals and the actions performed at any which one of the receiving user terminals, when executing actions, including measurement of performance of the actions, and feedback to the issuing user terminal **101** are summarised in *Figure 9*.

10 At step **901**, user terminal **102** is switched on at the mains. At step **902**, the instructions set required to store and use the brand positioning application and its associated data subsets is loaded into the main memory either from an external medium, such as a CD ROM to be read by CD ROM reader **211**, of from a central server located on a network, such as user
15 terminal **101** via the Internet **106**. At step **903**, the operator of user terminal **102** must log on to user terminal **101**, which acts as a central server, in order to obtain validated access to the data sets stored into user terminal **101** and/or send or receive information from the user terminal **101**. In the example, as senior management of the global company has expected
20 brand performance at step **703** and, subsequently, sent the template containing this information to all of its subsidiaries or, selectively, only the German national subsidiary, user terminal **102** of the national German subsidiary receives the template including expected brand performance thereof at step **904**.

25 At this stage, a question is asked at step **905** about the level of proficiency of the national subsidiaries' personnel with the brand values. Depending upon the length of establishment in time of a subsidiary of the

global company, personnel in a relatively recently established subsidiary may still frequently require access to brand reference material and thus, brand values. Alternatively, in a longer established subsidiary of the global company, its personnel may similarly require frequent access to brand reference material, thus brand values, in order to maintain consistency throughout their business activity.

Therefore, should the question asked at step 905 be answered in the negative, the template containing the brand values is accessed at step 906 and assimilated along the correlating information, such as brand assets. Alternatively, should the question asked at step 905 be answered positively, then the process proceeds directly to step 907.

At the step 907, the national German subsidiary carries out brand positioning activities, whilst ensuring that the commercial communication which embodies those actions conveys the brand values specified in the brand values template 703, with the communication designed to amend the perception of the brand values of brand customers and other interested parties according to the expected performance of the actions.

Thus, in the example, the data contained in templates 703 and 704 sent to user terminal 102 of the national German subsidiary is either utilised by the national German subsidiary for marketing activity on the national scale and/or further conveyed to user terminals 801, 802, 803, 804 and 805 of regional German subsidiaries for implementation into marketing activity on a regional or local scale, or a combination thereof.

A combination of a national and regional implementation of the data in templates 703 and 704 conveyed to user terminal 102 is shown in *Figure 10*.

At *Figure 10*, user terminals 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004 and 1005

respectively represent third party suppliers of services to the brand positioning activity to regional German subsidiaries **801** and **805**. User terminal **1001** is associated with a national company which provides printed material such as brochures or flyers. User terminal **1002** is associated with a local radio station which broadcasts advertisements as part of its airwave content. User terminal **1003** is associated with a national company which organises polls and market surveys. User terminal **1004** is associated with another local radio station, which also broadcasts advertisement as part of its airwave content. User terminal **1005** is associated with a marketing consultancy which specialises in providing video advertisement for broadcasting on television.

Referring back to *Figure 9*, the national German subsidiary has carried out the actions with conforming to the data set out in templates **703** and **704** at step **907**. Upon completing the actions, the national or regional German subsidiaries then measure the performance of the actions qualitatively or quantitatively within the market the actions were carried out. In the example, the national German subsidiary mandates the national polling company associated with user terminal **1003**. The national German subsidiary is able to convey a template, ie the brand values, to the national polling company, which the polling company should poll a representative sample of the national population about. Irrespectively of the polling method and apparatus used by the national polling company, which will be known to those skilled in the art, once the polling results are fed back, the national German subsidiary by the national polling company, the polling data is then pre-processed within the local brand positioning application in order to convert the polling data into brand positioning-related performance level to be fed back to management at step **909** of *Figure 9*.

The actions performed at user terminal 102 to carry out the pre-processing of the polling data in order to obtain the measurement of the performance levels is summarised in *Figure 11*.

At step 1101, the national polling company carries out polls and market studies according to the known art in order to obtain brand positioning data which can be used to measure the performance of the actions implemented. The collected data is then fed back to the national German subsidiary and implemented in the main memory of user terminal 102. At step 1102, a question is asked as to whether the collected data is qualitative. Qualitative data is understood as a non-quantitative answer provided by an individual questioned about a non-quantitative characteristic of the brand. For instance, a customer of the brand might have been asked to cite what are, in his opinion, the three most descriptive adjectives of the brand? In which case the open-endedness of the question allows the customer to cite names which do not form the part of the set of brand values specified in template 703. Such an open-ended question may be used in order to discover what may be alternative brand values not yet considered for association with the brand. Alternatively, the brand customer might have been asked to rank the brand values contained in template 703 in order of preference, eg most important to least important, with the grades of importance being weighed with a ratio. Such a question is closed and provides quantitative data, ie collected data which can be compiled from a plurality of individuals being asked the closed question.

Thus, should the question asked at step 1102 be answered positively, then the collected data is qualitative and, for the purpose of analysis, must be processed in order to derive quantitative data from it. Consequently, at step 1103, every alternative qualitative answer given by

polled individuals to a same open-ended question are compiled and the number of individuals who gave an identical qualitative answer to the question is added for every one of the alternative answers. At step 1104, the number of entries even for every alternative qualitative answer is stored
5 in the main memory of user terminal 102 as quantitative data associated with a qualitative element.

Alternatively, should the question asked at step 1102 be answered in the negative, the process can then proceed directly to step 1105, as the data collected and sent back to user terminal 102 by terminal 1003 of the
10 national polling company simply takes the form of quantitative data which can be directly compared with historical quantitative data and thus does not require pre-processing.

At step 1105, the collected data pre-processed according to steps 1102 to 1104 is associated with the brand positioning activities of the
15 subsidiaries and the brand values template 703 as said data constitutes the data upon which the performance level of the actions is assessed and, depending upon the rate of success of the actions, brand positioning is altered or not. The pre-processed result data is then sent back to central
20 server 101 of the senior management, where the brand positioning can be reassessed after the brand positioning activities were implemented and their results measured. Actions at the central server 101, when reassessing the brand positioning after the actions have been implemented, is summarised in *Figure 11*.

At step 1101, the result data is received from the national
25 subsidiaries. In order for the performance data from different national subsidiaries to be correctly correlated, the performance data must first be semantically harmonised to ensure that collected data can be associated

and compiled irrespective of its country of origin, thus provide an accurate representation of the global brand positioning. Thus, at step 1202, a question is asked as to whether the collected and potentially pre-processed data received from a subsidiary is semantically foreign. If this question is answered in the positive, then at step 1203, multinational data is associated by means of key words stored in a multinational look-up table stored in the main memory of user terminal 101. The multinational look-up table includes the brand values issued in template 703 and the translation in multiple foreign languages thereof; the association carried out step 1203 is performed using relational database methods known to those skilled in the art.

As the association is carried out and qualitative or quantitative collected data or a combination thereof are correctly correlated, the collected data is first compared at step 1204 in order to further rationalise data which was obtained from the same qualitative or quantitative elements or a combination thereof. The action carried out step 1204 eventually enables the consolidation of the data collected globally, which thus forms the global result of the national and regional actions at step 1205.

As the data collected after actions have been implemented is consolidated at step 1205 to obtain a true representative global data set, the global data set can now be compared with the historical data set 307 obtained from the same qualitative or quantitative elements or a combination thereof at step 1206.

At step 1207 the comparison carried out at step 1206 identifies positive or negative changes in the global brand positioning as quantitative data defining brand positioning before the actions were implemented and quantitative data defining brand positioning after the actions were

implemented are preferably, but not necessarily, different.

Finally, at step 1208, the brand positioning application outputs the result of the actions carried out between steps 1202 and 1207 in the graphical representation area 705 of video display unit 701 of user terminal 101.

A graphic display of the output of the result of the actions onto brand positioning, including the template containing the inputted set of brand values, expected performance of the actions and brand positioning data is shown in *Figure 13*.

The same video display unit 701, which enables viewing of information stored and process by user terminal 101, displays the same graphical user interface 702 of brand positioning application 303. The graphical user interface 702 comprises three distinct areas: brand values template 703, expected brand performance 704, and graphical representation area 705.

Within graphical representation area 705, the optimum brand value perception delimiters 707, which graphically represent the brand value expected performance 704 remains fixed as they define optimal brand positioning which the three brand values, safety, value relative to price and performance should visually match. Upon completing step 405 of the process according to the present invention, the collected data or post action data, once harmonised, compiled and compared with historical data then updates and becomes part of the historical data, which defines the graphical representation of the brand positioning by way of histograms 706. In the example, one can observe that the perception of the three brand values which define the brand has altered compared to the perception graphically represented in *Figure 7*, ie prior to the implementation of brand

positioning activities. The 'safety' brand value is now less prominent within the overall perception of the brand of brand customers and other interested parties. Similarly, the 'value for price' brand value is now more prominent within the psychological perception of the brand by brand customers and other interested parties. The perception of the 'performance' brand value remains unchanged after the actions.

Thus, the senior management of the global company can, upon visually observing the variations of histograms 706 within graphical representation area 705 of brand positioning application 303 before and after implementing brand positioning activities, determine that the global brand positioning after the actions were implemented is now closer to the optimal brand positioning and, in the case of the 'value for price' brand value, this particular element of the brand is optimally perceived by customers of the brand and other interested parties. The senior management may therefore again carry out steps 401 through to 405, with a particular emphasis on the 'performance' brand value of the brand, whilst sustaining the 'value for price' brand value of the brand and briefly mentioning the 'safety' brand value of the brand, and so on and so forth until optimal brand positioning is achieved.

Claims

1. Apparatus for generating, processing and presenting data wherein:

5 a set of characteristics is formulated at a first networked user terminal;

said set of characteristics is transmitted from said first networked user terminal to a second networked user terminal;

10 said transmitted set of characteristics is applied into data representative of a marketing activity at said second networked user terminal;

said representative data is stored in a memory of said second networked user terminal;

15 said representative data is extracted from said memory of said second networked user terminal at said first networked user terminal; and

said representative data is compared with said characteristics formulated.

20 2. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said set of characteristics comprises brand values or brand performance levels or a combination thereof;

25 3. Apparatus according to claims 1 and 2, wherein said set of characteristics formulated at said first networked user terminal is inputted in a template which cannot be amended by said second networked user terminal;

4. Apparatus according to claims 1 to 3, wherein said first networked terminal is configured as a central server;

5. Apparatus according to claims 1 to 4, wherein said
5 representative data stored in said memory of said second user terminal comprises data relating to brand positioning activities or data relating to results of said brand positioning activities or a combination thereof;

6. Apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said data relating to
10 results of said brand positioning activities is qualitative or quantitative and can be semantically foreign;

7. Apparatus according to claims 1 and 6, wherein said
15 representative data extracted from said memory of said second networked user terminal at said first networked user terminal is preferably, but not necessarily, pre-processed at said second user terminal prior to being extracted;

8. Apparatus according to claims 1 and 7, wherein said
20 extracted representative data is preferably, but not necessarily, semantically harmonised by means of a multinational look-up table stored in the main memory of said first networked user terminal at said first networked user terminal prior to being compared with said characteristics formulated.

25

9. Apparatus according to claim 1 and 8, wherein said comparison of extracted representative data with said characteristics

formulated is preferably, but not exclusively, graphically output at said first networked user terminal by means of histograms.

5 **10.** A method of generating, processing and presenting data, said method comprising the steps of:

 formulating a set of characteristics at a first networked user terminal;
 transmitting said set of characteristics from said first networked user terminal to a second networked user terminal;

10 applying said transmitted set of characteristics into data representative of a marketing activity at said second networked user terminal;

 storing said representative data in a memory of said second networked user terminal;

15 extracting said representative data from said memory of said second networked user terminal at said first networked user terminal; and

 comparing said representative data with said characteristics formulated.

20 **11.** Method according to claim 10, wherein said set of characteristics comprises brand values or brand performance levels or a combination thereof;

25 **12.** Method according to claims 10 and 11, wherein said set of characteristics formulated at said first networked user terminal is inputted in a template which cannot be amended by said second networked user terminal;

13. Method according to claims 10 to 12, wherein said first networked terminal is configured as a central server;

5 14. Method according to claims 10 to 13, wherein said representative data stored in said memory of said second user terminal comprises data relating to brand positioning activities or data relating to results of said brand positioning activities or a combination thereof;

10 15. Method according to claim 14, wherein said data relating to results of said brand positioning activities is qualitative or quantitative and can be semantically foreign;

15 16. Method according to claims 10 and 15, wherein said representative data extracted from said memory of said second networked user terminal at said first networked user terminal is preferably, but not necessarily, pre-processed at said second user terminal prior to being extracted;

20 17. Method according to claims 10 and 16, wherein said extracted representative data is preferably, but not necessarily, semantically harmonised by means of a multinational look-up table stored in the main memory of said first networked user terminal at said first networked user terminal prior to being compared with said characteristics formulated.

25 18. Method according to claims 10 and 17, wherein said comparison of extracted representative data with said characteristics formulated is preferably, but not exclusively, graphically output at said first

networked user terminal by means of histograms.

19. A computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions executable by a computer such that, when executing said instructions, a computer will perform the steps of:

5.

formulating a set of characteristics at a first networked user terminal;

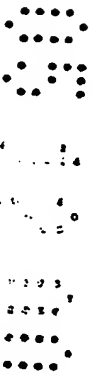
transmitting said set of characteristics from said first networked user terminal to a second networked user terminal;

10 applying said transmitted set of characteristics into data representative of a marketing activity at said second networked user terminal;

storing said representative data in a memory said second networked user terminal;

15 extracting said representative data from said memory of said second networked user terminal at said first networked user terminal; and

comparing said representative data with said characteristics formulated.





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Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK CI (Ed.S): G4A AUXF AUXX

Int CI (Ed.7): G06F 17/60

Other: Online: WPI, EPODOC, PAJ, INTERNET, IEL

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
A	EP 0939377 HITACHI LTD	
X	WO 99/45489 NFO WORLDWIDE INC. Page 3, lines 13 - 23.	1,3,4,10, 12, 13 & 19
A	JP 2000298691(FUJITSU BUSINESS SYSTEMS) (See WPI Abstract Accession No. 2001-151107/16)	

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.